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June 17, 2003

Amata J. Malo

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DATE

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicants : Gilbert M. Aust et al.  
Serial No. : 09/707,445  
Filing Date : November 6, 2000  
For : SURGICAL INSTRUMENT  
Group Art Unit : 3731  
Examiner : Michael H. Thaler  
Attorney Docket No. : A31-2047RE

**BOX AF**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL REJECTION****Introductory Comments**

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated April 24, 2003,  
please reconsider the above-identified application in view of  
the following amendment.

**STATUS OF CLAIMS:**

Claims 1, 2, and 4 have been allowed.

Claims 8 and 9 have been canceled.

Claims 3, 5-7, 10, and 11 stand rejected.